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14
15 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
16 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

17 Kevin Johnson, *on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated,*) Case No. 8:24-cv-01108-FLA (KESx)
18 Plaintiff,)
19 vs.) **STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
20 ORDER**
21 Serve All, Help All, Inc. d/b/a)
22 Nonprofit Alliance of Consumer)
23 Advocates, Faith First Bancorp, Inc.,)
24 and CDLG, PC d/b/a Consumer)
25 Defense Law Group,)
26 Defendants.)

1 1. A. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

2 Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential,
3 proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public
4 disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may
5 be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to
6 enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this
7 Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to
8 discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends
9 only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment
10 under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth
11 in Section 12.3, below, that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them
12 to file confidential information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the
13 procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a
14 party seeks permission from the court to file material under seal.

15
16 B. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

17 This action is likely to involve trade secrets, internal employee records,
18 financial records of Defendants' clients (who are third parties to this matter),
19 and/or proprietary information for which special protection from public disclosure
20 and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this action is warranted.
21 Such confidential and proprietary materials and information consist of, among
22 other things, confidential business or financial information, information regarding
23 confidential business practices, and financial information of some of Defendants'
24 clients (information implicating privacy rights of third parties), information
25 otherwise generally unavailable to the public, or which may be privileged or
26 otherwise protected from disclosure under state or federal statutes, court rules, case
27 decisions, or common law. Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to
28 facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery

1 materials, to adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep
2 confidential, to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of
3 such material in preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to address their handling
4 at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends of justice, a protective order for such
5 information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that information
6 will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that nothing be so
7 designated without a good faith belief that it has been maintained in a confidential,
8 non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public
9 record of this case.

10 2. DEFINITIONS

11 2.1 Action: the matter captioned Johnson v. Serve All, Help All, Inc. d/b/a
12 Nonprofit Alliance of Consumer Advocates, Faith First Bancorp, Inc., and CDLG,
13 PC d/b/a Consumer Defense Law Group, Case No. 8:24-cv-01108-FLA (KESx)
14 (C.D. Cal.).

15 2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation
16 of information or items under this Order.

17 2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of
18 how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for
19 protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in
20 the Good Cause Statement.

21 2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their
22 support staff).

23 2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or
24 items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as
25 “CONFIDENTIAL.”

26 2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of
27 the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including,
28

1 among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced
2 or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

3 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter
4 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve
5 as an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

6 2.8 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action.
7 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside
8 counsel.

9 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or
10 other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

11 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party
12 to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have
13 appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm
14 which has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

15 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
16 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their
17 support staffs).

18 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or
19 Discovery Material in this Action.

20 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support
21 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
22 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium)
23 and their employees and subcontractors.

24 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is
25 designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

26 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material
27 from a Producing Party.

28

1 3. SCOPE

2 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only
3 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or
4 extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or
5 compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or
6 presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

7 Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of the
8 trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

9 4. DURATION

10 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations
11 imposed by this Order shall remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees
12 otherwise in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall be
13 deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this Action,
14 with or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and
15 exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this Action,
16 including the time limits for filing any motions or applications for extension of
17 time pursuant to applicable law.

18 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

19 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.
20 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under
21 this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that
22 qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate
23 for protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written
24 communications that qualify so that other portions of the material, documents,
25 items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept
26 unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

27 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited.
28 Designations that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an

1 improper purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process
2 or to impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the
3 Designating Party to sanctions.

4 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that
5 it designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party
6 must promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable
7 designation.

8 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in
9 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise
10 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection
11 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or
12 produced.

13 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

14 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic
15 documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial
16 proceedings), that the Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend
17 “CONFIDENTIAL” (hereinafter “CONFIDENTIAL legend”), to each page that
18 contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page
19 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected
20 portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

21 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection
22 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated
23 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and
24 before the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be
25 deemed “CONFIDENTIAL.” After the inspecting Party has identified the
26 documents, or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then,
27 before producing the specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the
28 “CONFIDENTIAL legend” to each page that contains Protected Material. If only

1 a portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the
2 Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making
3 appropriate markings in the margins).

4 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify the
5 Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition
6 all protected testimony.

7 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for
8 any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the
9 exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend
10 "CONFIDENTIAL." If only a portion or portions of the information warrants
11 protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the
12 protected portion(s).

13 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent
14 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive
15 the Designating Party's right to secure protection under this Order for such
16 material. Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make
17 reasonable efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the
18 provisions of this Order. The Designating Party shall promptly correct any
19 inadvertent failure to designate within 14 days of discovering the oversight, and in
20 any event, no later than 60 days before trial.

21 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

22 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a
23 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court's
24 Scheduling Order.

25 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party shall initiate the dispute
26 resolution process under Local Rule 37.1 et seq. or follow the procedures for
27 informal, telephonic discovery hearings on the Court's website.

1 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on
2 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper
3 purpose (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other
4 parties) may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating
5 Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties shall
6 continue to afford the material in question the level of protection to which it is
7 entitled under the Producing Party's designation until the Court rules on the
8 challenge.

9 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

10 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is
11 disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this
12 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such
13 Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under
14 the conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a
15 Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL
16 DISPOSITION).

17 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a
18 location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons
19 authorized under this Order.

20 7.2 Disclosure of “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items. Unless
21 otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a
22 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
23 “CONFIDENTIAL” only to:

24 (a) the Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well
25 as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably
26 necessary to disclose the information for this Action;

27 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the
28 Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

1 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom
2 disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
3 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

4 (d) the court and its personnel;

5 (e) court reporters and their staff;

6 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional
7 Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have
8 signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

9 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a
10 custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

11 (h) during their depositions, witnesses ,and attorneys for witnesses, in the
12 Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing
13 party requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit 1 hereto; and (2)
14 they will not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign
15 the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise
16 agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed
17 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may
18 be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone
19 except as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and

20 (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel,
21 mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

22 **8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED**
23 **IN OTHER LITIGATION**

24 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation
25 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as
26 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

27 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification shall
28 include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

(b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and

(c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in that court of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful directive from another court.

9. A NON-PARTY'S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BEPRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

(a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Non-Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

(b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to produce a Non-Party's confidential information in its possession, and the Party is subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party's confidential information, then the Party shall:

(1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement with a Non-Party;

(2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific description of the information requested; and

(3) make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-Party, if requested.

(c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court. Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order, and (d) request such person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE
PROTECTED MATERIAL

When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal

1 Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify
2 whatever procedure may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for
3 production without prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence
4 502(d) and (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure
5 of a communication or information covered by the attorney-client privilege or
6 work product protection, the parties may incorporate their agreement in the
7 stipulated protective order submitted to the court.

8 **12. MISCELLANEOUS**

9 **12.1 Right to Further Relief.** Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any
10 person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

11 **12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections.** By stipulating to the entry of this
12 Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to
13 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in
14 this Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on
15 any ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective
16 Order.

17 **12.3 Filing Protected Material.** A Party that seeks to file under seal any
18 Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material
19 may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of
20 the specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected
21 Material under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the
22 information in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

23 **13. FINAL DISPOSITION**

24 After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within
25 60 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must
26 return all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As
27 used in this subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts,
28 compilations, summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of

1 the Protected Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed,
2 the Receiving Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and,
3 if not the same person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline
4 that (1) identifies (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that
5 was returned or destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained
6 any copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or
7 capturing any of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel
8 are entitled to retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial,
9 deposition, and hearing transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition
10 and trial exhibits, expert reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert
11 work product, even if such materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival
12 copies that contain or constitute Protected Material remain subject to this
13 Protective Order as set forth in Section 4 (DURATION).

14 14. Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate
15 measures including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or monetary
16 sanctions.

17 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

18 Date: _____.

/s/ Alex D. Kruzyk

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15 By: /s/ Jesse J. Thaler
16 Jesse J. Thaler,
17 Attorney for Defendants CONSUMER
18 DEFENSE LAW GROUP, P.C. erroneously
19 sued as CDLG, PC doing business as
20 Consumer Defense Law Group) and FAITH
21 FIRST BANCORP, INC.
22

23 IT IS SO ORDERED.
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25 Dated: January 13, 2025
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28

29 Hon. Karen E. Scott
30 United States Magistrate Judge
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